

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently amended) A vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) dimer consisting of a first monomer and a second monomer, each monomer comprising an amino acid sequence having at least about 90% sequence identity with amino acids 11 to 116 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3, retaining a cysteine (Cys) at or corresponding to position 116 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3 (Cys-116), wherein the Cys residue at or corresponding to position 116 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3 (Cys-116) of each monomer is disulfide-bonded to an additional extraneous Cys, and wherein at least one monomer has an Asn-to-Glu amino acid substitution at or corresponding to position 75 [[-77]] of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3.

2. (Currently amended) The VEGF dimer of claim 1 wherein the Cys residue at or corresponding to position 116 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3 (Cys-116) in at least one of said first monomer or second monomers, or both, is disulfide-bonded to a peptide of 2-5 amino acids.

3. (Original) The VEGF dimer of claim 2 wherein said peptide is glutathione.

4. (Cancelled)

5. (Currently amended) The VEGF dimer of claim 1 wherein said first and second monomers comprise amino acids 4 to 116 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3 and an Asn-to-Glu amino acid substitution at or corresponding to position 75.

6. (Currently amended) The VEGF dimer of claim 1 wherein said first and second monomers comprise amino acids 1 to 120 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3 and an Asn-to-Glu amino acid substitution at or corresponding to position 75.

7. (Currently amended) The VEGF dimer of claim 1 wherein said first and second monomers comprise amino acids 1 to 121 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3 and an Asn-to-Glu amino acid substitution at or corresponding to position 75.

8. (Currently amended) The VEGF dimer of claim 1 wherein said first and second monomers comprise amino acids 5 to 120 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3 and an Asn-to-Glu amino acid substitution at or corresponding to position 75.

9. (Original) The VEGF dimer of claim 1 wherein the length of at least one of said first and second monomers does not exceed 121 amino acids.

10. (Original) The VEGF dimer of claim 9 wherein the length of each of said first and second monomers does not exceed 121 amino acids.

11. (Original) The VEGF dimer of claim 10 wherein the length of each of said first and second monomers is between 110 and 121 amino acids.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Previously presented) The VEGF dimer of claim 1 wherein said first and second monomers have an Asn-to-Glu amino acid substitution at or corresponding to position 75.

14. (Currently amended) A composition comprising a vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) dimer consisting of a first and a second monomer each comprising at least amino acids 11 to 116 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3, or comprising an amino acid sequence having at least about 90% sequence identity with amino acids 11 to 116 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3, and retaining a cysteine (Cys) at or corresponding to position 116 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3 (Cys-116), wherein Cys-116 of each monomer is disulfide bonded to an additional extraneous Cys, and wherein at least one

monomer has an Asn-to-Glu amino acid substitution at or corresponding to position 75 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3, in admixture with a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle.

15. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 14 wherein in at least one of said first and second monomers said additional Cys is part of a peptide of 2-5 amino acids.

16. (Original) The composition of claim 15 wherein said peptide is glutathione.

17. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 16 wherein each monomer is disulfide bonded, through a Cys residue, to a glutathione moiety.

18. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 14 wherein said first and second monomers comprise amino acids 4 to 116 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3 and an Asn-to-Glu amino acid substitution at or corresponding to position 75.

19. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 14 wherein said first and second monomers comprise amino acids 1 to 120 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3 and an Asn-to-Glu amino acid substitution at or corresponding to position 75.

20. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 14 wherein said first and second monomers comprise amino acids 1 to 121 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3 and an Asn-to-Glu amino acid substitution at or corresponding to position 75.

21. (Currently amended) The composition of claim 14 wherein said first and second monomers comprise amino acids 5 to 120 of SEQ ID NO: [[1]] 3 and an Asn-to-Glu amino acid substitution at or corresponding to position 75.

22-24. (Cancelled)

25. (Previously presented) The composition of claim 24 wherein said first and second monomers additionally comprise an N-terminal methionine group.

26-74 (Cancelled)